



AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF RHEUMATOLOGY
EDUCATION • TREATMENT • RESEARCH

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May 2, 2013

The Honorable Joann Ginal
Colorado House of Representatives
200 East Colfax
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Representative Ginal:

On behalf of rheumatologists and rheumatology health professionals in the state of Colorado, **the American College of Rheumatology is very pleased to endorse SB 13-277**, which would develop a single, standard form for requesting prior authorization of prescription drugs. We applaud your leadership and strongly encourage your colleagues to support this bill.

Rheumatologists provide care for thousands of Coloradans living with chronic illnesses, such as Rheumatoid Arthritis, who need access to medications that require prior authorization. These medications can help prevent permanent disability in patients, save and improve lives, and allow patients to function and remain in the workforce.

Prior authorization procedures are currently very labor intensive. Because insurance companies and pharmacy benefit managers require various prior authorization forms, sometimes even several different forms for various medication groups, physicians and their staff are forced to spend significant amounts of time on insurance-related administrative work. This limits the time available to focus on quality patient care. Additionally, because submitting these forms is unnecessarily complicated, patients may face delays in receiving the treatments their physician has prescribed. This is particularly troubling for patients with arthritis for whom such delays could mean disabling progression of their disease.

Thank you for introducing SB 13-277 and for focusing attention on these serious issues. Your legislation will alleviate much of the administrative burden on physicians and practices by developing a single, standard form for requesting prior authorization. It will also promote timely access to medications by placing time restrictions on insurer's responses to prior authorization requests, protecting patients from serious complications due to treatment delays.

We greatly appreciate your leadership and the support of your colleagues to ensure that Coloradans with chronic conditions are able to access the critical medications they need.

Sincerely,

Tim Laing, MD
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
American College of Rheumatology